

Story #158 (Tapes #1 & 2,
 Summer 1970.
 Begins on Side 1 of #1 and goes
 into Side 1 of #2,
 skipping Side 2 of #1)

Narrator: Hacı Gönen, 66,
 gentleman farmer

Location: Yukarı Kise Köy
 Güvem Nahiye
 Kızılcahamam
 Ankara vilayet

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The Persecution and Revenge of Karacinin Mola

I once met a fellow by the name of Karacinin Mola who told me about some of the adventures which had befallen him, and I listened to these.

"One day," he started, "it was about bedtime. I was a married man, but I had no children. When I was about to go to bed, there was a knock on the door. Wondering who it might be, my heart started beating and I went to the door in my underclothes and opened it, saying, 'Who is it?'"

"There were two strangers there who said, 'Friend, will you show us the way to Çerkes [next village], for example.' [A way of indicating local application of the tale.]

"I showed them the way, pointing with my finger, 'That is the way to Çerkes.'

"Will you lead us out of the village, friend?" asked the strangers.

"I wanted to put on my clothes, but they objected, 'No, no. You just walk with us to the edge of the village.'

"We reached ^{the} end of the village, where they struck me with a whip, turning me into a horse. They climbed on me and rode me to a place six hours' distance. In the morning, they left me there in my underclothes [back to human form again]. I wanted to return to the village, but I wasn't properly dressed. I was ashamed of myself because I thought people would

wonder what this half-naked man was doing here. I hid myself somewhere until nightfall and then walked back to my village. I knocked on the door, and my wife asked, 'Who is it?'

"I said, 'It is I.'

"'Come in, then,' my wife said.

"We went to bed. I was very tired, of course. The same strangers came again and rode on my back. This went on for many nights, so that I wasn't able to go out and see my friends any more. I made up my mind not to do this, but they kept coming every night, turned me into a horse, and rode on my back. This went on for weeks and even months.

"One day a woman in the village sent the word around that she knew what was the matter with Karacınin Mola and that she could advise me about my problem. She said she knew what had befallen me. I went to her.

"'This is what you should do,' she said, 'when these strangers come to get you. Take their whip out of their hands and step back into your house, shutting your door. Then they cannot do anything to you.'

"I was pleased that I had at last found a remedy for my problem and I returned home. When we were about to go to bed, there was a knocking on the door. 'Come along,' they said. But this time I grabbed their whip and went inside. I thought I was safe now.

"My wife was quite a good-looking woman. One day we had a dispute and quarrel. I had hung the whip on the wall of the house. She took the whip from the wall and started hitting me with it, saying, 'You were saved from being a horse, but now you'll become a dog and see what that means.'

"At once I became a huge dog and started baying on dunghills and barking at passersby in front of my house. I was upset over this situation and wondered what sort of business this was. What should I do? I decided to

go away. I went to the woods, where there were seven or eight flocks of sheep grazing. I became worried when I saw the sheepdogs with the flocks because I feared they might attack and bite me. While I headed for Deli Otur [not certain--next village?], sneaking away, a sheepdog saw me and started barking at me, at which all the dogs of the seven flocks barked and ran after me. Though I was not a real dog, I had intelligence and strangled every dog that attacked me. Once I caught a dog, that was the end of it. Then the shepherds

upon me. One said, 'This is a good dog. I want it because it fought twenty dogs.' Another said, finally, 'Let us do it this way. Let's keep away from this dog and then call him. To whomever it goes, let him possess

"I looked at the faces of these people, and my eye decided on one of the shepherds. When they called, I went to his side, and he said, 'The dog is mine.' He took me with him in the night. He leashed me near him while he let the other dogs run free to tend the flocks. About midnight the dogs started barking and disappeared. The shepherds concluded that wolves may have struck the flocks, and they went after the dogs. When I was sitting by the fire, I saw a wolf holding a sheep in its mouth, close by the fire.

I got up and caught the wolf by the neck. When the shepherds returned, they saw I had killed a wolf. They untied me and cooked the sheep killed by the wolf and gave me a piece of the meat raw, but I wouldn't eat it. 'Let us then give him cooked meat.' They made kebab and gave it to me. They were surprised they gave me cooked meat.

"In the morning the owner of the flock, the aga, came along on horseback. The shepherds told him what had happened and how they found

this dog. They told him the flocks had been attacked by wolves and this particular dog, though a new visitor, had killed a wolf.

"'You don't say,' the aga said. 'If that's the case, slaughter a sheep for him every week.'

"They did as they were told, and I spent much time in this way.

The daughter of a member of Parliament in Ankara became ill, and the doctors could find no remedy for her illness. Then a German professor said that this sick child should be put in the skin of an old dog.* She will then recover. 'There is no other remedy for her illness.' When they asked about who had a dog in the village, they were told that Ahmet Aga, of such and such a village, had a dog. Ahmet Aga had brought his dog home one day when two policemen came in a taxi and said, 'Aga, you have a dog which you must give us.'

"'I cannot sell that dog.

"'You are not going to sell it but give it to us. You see, the daughter of the ruler of the country became ill and she will get well only if placed in the skin of a large dog.' The aga had to give the dog. They put him in the taxi and left, taking the dog to where the sick child was.

"That day the doctor had visited the sick girl and asked if the dog had been brought. When told that the dog hadn't come, he left, giving instructions that the girl should not be allowed to have anyone visit her. She was lying alone on a bed. They took me to the girl's room and tied me to the leg of the bed. At night, they locked the door and left me in the room with the sick girl. The cupboard opened and an Arab came from it and went and sat on the sick child, who was already dying. He started crushing the patient. When I saw this I stood up, jumped on the Arab, and

* Putting seriously injured people in skins of newly killed sheep or goats is a folk treatment still used in the villages.

started biting him, wanting to kill him. Right then the Arab started talking, 'The son of Karacı, don't kill me. I'll help you when you are in trouble.' I let the Arab go after curing the girl with the help of the Arab, and the Arab returned where he had come from. The patient recovered by medicines described by him [Arab]. Before sunfise, the patient had recovered from her illness. When they came to see her, thinking she would be dead, they saw her well.

"What happened to you?"

"This dog treated me," she answered.

"The good news was taken to the girl's parents. They took the girl's evidence, when she explained that it was the dog that had saved her life. The girl's father said, 'I had promised to give my daughter to the one who had saved her life, and to keep my promise I allow her to marry this dog. I must do this. Come along, you big dog. With Allah's order I give you my daughter.'

"I wagged my tail.

"He repeated the offer three times. Then he said, 'I shall hang a bag of gold from the treasury.' They then did this and released me. When I was about to reach my master's house, I remembered my own home and I went there. My wife had a lover and had done this through magic to get rid of me. I went near my house and circled it once. It soon was light--morning. I started baying. My wife saw me and shouted to her lover, 'Hey, you, my man, our big dog is back

"Where is it?" her lover asked

"There in front of the house," she said.

When everyone in the house had come out, I saw that my wife had begotten two children by that man in my absence. They looked at me and decided to feed me. They saw I had a bag of gold hanging from my neck. They came and

took the gold, saying, 'Oh, our big dog has won [a reward],' and they gave me much food to eat, they were so pleased.

"Then my wife came and struck me with the whip, saying, 'So far, you have been a dog. Now you'll be a cuckoo bird and sing.'

"I became a cuckoo and flew to the mountains, singing, 'Cuckoo, cuckoo.' On a cold and windy day I could find no shelter, but hid myself in a hole in the wall of a house. But the children of that village saw me there. They leaned a ladder there, put their hands in the hole where I hid, and started pulling me by the wings and the tail, tearing all my feathers and leaving me naked. Then they took me out in the heavy rain. I felt very cold, as I was naked. Then a woman came along carrying water to her house, and asked, 'Children, what do you have there?'

"We have caught a bird but can't share it.'

"You can't share it. Sell it to me.'

"They agreed, and the woman bought me from them. She put the bird [me] in her skirt and brought me home, putting me by the fire on a piece of wool, all naked. She took money from the shelf and gave it to the children, saying, 'You go and share this money.'

"The children went away quite satisfied. While the woman started doing her housework, I rested by the fireplace, blinking and trying to warm myself. Soon it became evening, and the woman had cooked food and set the table. I wondered for whom this woman prepared all this, for she was alone. When she finished all her work, she placed the food on the table and took a whip in her hand. When she took the whip in her hand, I knew she was going to do something to me. She hit me with the whip, saying, 'O Karacın Mola. Didn't I tell you I would come to your aid on a bad day? Stand up!'

"Right then I stood up and became Karacın Mola. She brought me clothes and had me dressed. 'Come along,' she said. 'Let us eat.' I could not

believe my eyes. I wondered if all this was true. It was. We ate, and spent the night there.

"In the morning she said, 'Take this whip. Go to your wife and do to her whatever you may think of doing.'

"She sent me away before sunrise. I reached home, broke the door down, and entered. I struck my wife and her lover with ^{the} whip, demanding that they be turned into mules. They became mules. I locked them in the stable. I had collars made for them. It was the Fall of the year. I got a cart and had them haul the hay for everyone in the neighborhood* ^{and thresh} their sheaves of wheat.

[Continued on Tape 2, Side 1]

Then I had a large thrasher (döğen) [beater] made with 1000 flints on the bottom. I said, 'Come on. Who needs a threshing job done?' I had a chair put on the thrasher, sat on the chair, took my goad in hand, and started threshing. I used to get fifteen cartloads of sheaves threshed in about one hour. In this way I threshed the grain of the whole village. Then I plowed the fields of everyone in the neighborhood.

"Thus I made them suffer [tortured them] in every possible way until Fall.

Fall

"Then in the Kildir Ahmet took up his gun and went hunting.

('Shall we say Kildir Ahmet? [uses local name]' he said. The audience answered, 'Yes, say Kildir Ahmet!') He said, 'If I shoot anything today, I'll build a fire and cook my first game there.' When he was walking, rifle in his hands, through the woods, for example towards Cikrik [cikrik = spinning wheel] Koy [local village], a crow [pelitci Karga--acorn crow] flew up. He touched his rifle [pulled the trigger], and shot the crow, but, I couldn't eat crow flesh. 'If it is not edible, it would not be considered game.

This is a hay-making region.

"He walked on, and next he shot a pigeon. He built a fire at once and started roasting it there. When it was cooked, he put it on a piece of bread, tore off a leg of the bird, and when he was about to put it in his mouth, the meat fell from his mouth. When he tried to pick it up, the other leg fell off. When all the flesh and bones fell, they soon joined one another and became a whole pigeon again and flew up into the air. The hunter said, 'Good heavens! I am a man of this advanced age and have never before seen anything like this!'"

"The bird responded, 'You may not have seen anything of this sort, but go and talk to Karacının Mola and he'll tell you about such strange things!'"

Then the hunter returned to the village and asked, 'Where is Karacının Mola?'

"'Oh, he's threshing,' they said

"He found him, Karacının. 'Selâmunaleykûm,' he said.

"'Aleykûmselâm,' responded Karacının Mola.

"'Stop your work awhile,' the hunter said.

"'What is wrong?'"

"'Well, such and such a thing happened to me. While hunting, I said I hadn't seen anything like what happened to me. The pigeon said, and see Karacının Mola and learn from him.' Oh, friend, tell me! happened to you?!"

"Karacının Mola said, 'Come on to the thresher and I'll tell you what happened to me.' We both sat on the thresher. He told me all the things [that I told you before, says the narrator]

"When I heard the story of Karacının Mola, I commented, 'Really, you must have suffered a lot.'"

Narrator: This story I heard from Karacinin Mola.

Ahmet Uysal: Was Karacinin Mola a real man?

Narrator: No, imaginary. I heard this tale from some other teller of the tale--it's a story many men tell. But once there must have been such a man as Karacinin Mola--or there wouldn't have been such a story.

Ahmet Uysal: Who is Kildir Ahmet?

Narrator: Kildir Ahmet is a real person in the village.